



Safeguarding Children as Victims of Domestic Abuse

- [1. Introduction](#)
- [2. Impact on children](#)
- [3. Definition](#)
- [4. Signs and Indicators of Domestic Abuse](#)
- [5. High Risk Factors](#)
- [6. Responding to child victims of Domestic Abuse](#)
- [7. Safeguarding Children Referrals, Pathways and Thresholds](#)
- [8. Responding to adult victims of Domestic Abuse](#)
- [9. Responding to adult perpetrators of Domestic Abuse](#)
- [10. Domestic Abuse Referral Pathways](#)
- [11. Additional Considerations](#)
- [12. Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme \(DVDs\) – ‘Clare’s Law’](#)
- [13. Domestic Violence Protection Orders \(DVPOs\)](#)
- [14. Domestic Homicide Reviews](#)
- [15. Local Support](#)
- [16. National Support](#)

1. Introduction

When a professional working in Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth or Southampton assesses that a child or adult requires additional support, they need to complete an inter-agency referral or contact form as per local processes and share this with the relevant Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. The use of the Threshold Guidance will assist this process and help inform the practitioner’s decision-making.

Domestic abuse has a significant impact on children (up to 18 years old). Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (‘the 2021 Act’) recognises children as victims of domestic abuse if the child sees, hears, or experiences the effects of the abuse, and is related to, or falls under “parental responsibility” of, the victim¹ and/or perpetrator of the domestic abuse. A child might therefore be considered a victim of domestic abuse under the 2021 Act where one parent is abusing another parent, or where a parent is abusing, or being abused by, a partner or relative. Children are automatically treated as victims of domestic abuse regardless of whether they are present or not during such incidents.

¹ The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 uses the term ‘victim’ but not everyone who has been subjected to domestic abuse chooses to describe themselves as a ‘victim’ and they may prefer another term, for example, ‘survivor’.

Those aged between 16 and 18 can be identified as both perpetrators and victims. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 specifies that domestic abuse occurs if those involved in the abusive behaviour are aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other.

The Children Act 1989² introduced Significant Harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect are all categories of Significant Harm.

Prevalence

It is not easy to get an accurate picture of the prevalence of domestic abuse. It is known that many victims/survivors under-report the abuse they are subjected to. This can be because they are scared to report or are prevented from making disclosures and/or accessing support by their abusers. Some victims/ survivors do not realise that they are being subjected to domestic abuse and may need help from family members, friends or professionals to identify this.

Victims/survivors often face barriers to reporting or accessing support and may be unwilling to seek help from statutory services because of fears of racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination, or because of fears of victim-blaming attitudes by services.

The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel Annual Report 2022-2023³ found in half (50%, n=198) of cases from the period April 2022 to March 2023 where a child died or was seriously harmed, the presence of domestic abuse was reported within the household. [The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel have also published a briefing on multi-agency safeguarding and domestic abuse.](#)

2. Impact on children

Children who witness domestic abuse are at risk of both short and long-term physical and mental health problems. Every child will be affected differently to the trauma of domestic abuse. Research shows that children experiencing domestic abuse can be negatively affected in every aspect of their functioning, in terms of their safety, physical and mental health and wellbeing, school attendance and achievement, economic wellbeing and emotional development.

There are a range of factors that may determine the nature of their experience - including age, sex, disability, race and socio-economic context. Professionals should develop an individual response for every child and young person affected, including for siblings⁴.

The effects may continue into adulthood, affecting an individual's ability to form peer friendships and healthy partner relationships of their own. In the most extreme cases, children are at risk of serious injury or death as a result of domestic abuse. For many children, the

² [The Children Act 1989](#)

³ The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: annual report 2022 to 2023

⁴ The Young People's Family Justice Board have produced some [top tips for professionals working with children and young people who have experience of and been affected by domestic abuse](#)

experience of living with domestic abuse is the underlying factor in other needs for which they come to the notice of services and individual organisations.

This resource provides accessible, practical advice for front-line practitioners who are working in situations where domestic abuse is known or suspected.

3. Definition

Children may experience domestic abuse directly, as victims in their own right, or indirectly, due to the impact the abuse has on others such as the non-abusive parent. Where there is domestic abuse, the well-being of the children in the household must be promoted and all practitioners must consider the need to safeguard the children, including unborn children.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) defines Domestic Abuse as:

“Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or a pattern of incidents. Domestic abuse is not limited to physical acts of violence or threatening behaviour, and can include emotional, psychological, controlling or coercive behaviour, sexual and/or economic abuse.

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and adolescent to parent violence. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home”.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 states that behaviour is ‘abusive’ if it consists of any of the following (see pages 28-33 for fuller definition [Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance, Home Office, 2022](#)) :

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Violent or threatening behaviour
- Controlling or coercive behaviour
- Economic abuse
- Psychological, emotional or other abuse

Coercive control is a pattern of behaviour which seeks to undermine a person’s self-esteem or sense of self and restrict or remove their liberty or freedom. It describes a variety of controlling acts including manipulation, intimidation, sexual coercion and gaslighting (a form of psychological abuse in which a victim is manipulated into doubting their own memory and sanity).

Economic abuse involves behaviours that interfere with an individual’s ability to acquire, use and maintain economic resources such as money, transportation and utilities. It can be controlling or coercive. It can make the individual economically dependent on the abuser, thereby limiting their ability to escape and access safety.

The behaviour may consist of a single incident or behaviours that are repeated over time.

Victims and persons who use abusive or unhealthy behaviours must be aged 16 or over and identified as being 'personally connected' as intimate partners, ex-partners, family members or individuals who share parental responsibility for a child. There is no requirement for the victim and perpetrator to live in the same household.

4. Signs and Indicators of Domestic Abuse (children)

It can be difficult to know if domestic abuse is happening. Even if they are not physically harmed, children may experience emotional and psychological damage as a result of witnessing domestic abuse⁵.

Signs and indicators that a child has experienced domestic abuse can include:

- withdrawn or detached behaviour
- ambivalent feelings towards both the abuser and the non-abusing parent
- constant or frequent sickness
- frustration or aggression
- bullying peers
- problems in school or with learning
- anxiety, depression, or suicidal thoughts
- drug or alcohol use
- easily startled or seem on edge
- fear of leaving the home
- bed-wetting or increased soiling
- nightmares or insomnia
- withdrawal or struggles with separation
- difficulty identifying feelings or communicating needs
- difficulty developing positive peer relationships

Children who witness domestic abuse are at risk of both short and long-term physical and mental health problems. Every child will be affected differently to the trauma of domestic abuse.

Short-term effects of domestic abuse

For **young children** this can include:

- bed-wetting
- increased sensitivity and crying
- difficulty sleeping or falling asleep
- separation anxiety

For **school aged children** this can include:

- a loss of drive to participate in activities and school
- lower grades in school
- feeling guilty and to blame for the abuse happening to them
- getting into trouble more often
- physical signs such as headaches and stomach aches

For **teenagers** this can include:

⁵ Barnados: Effects of Domestic Abuse on children

- acting out in negative ways such as missing school or fighting with family members
- having low self-esteem
- finding it difficult to make friends
- engaging in risky behaviours such as using alcohol and other drugs

Long-term effects of domestic abuse:

- mental health problems, such as becoming anxious or depressed. Low mental health can also lead to big impacts on physical health, including self-harm or developing an eating disorder
- having a lowered sense of self-worth
- using alcohol and other drugs as unhealthy coping mechanisms
- repeating behaviours seen in their home

Professionals should be alert to the signs that a child or adult may be experiencing domestic abuse. Professionals should always consider during an assessment the need to offer children and adults the opportunity of being seen alone and ask whether they are experiencing, or have previously experienced, domestic abuse. Discussions about specific behaviours can help children and adults understand this, this may include the need to explain the different forms of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can present differently in every situation with differing levels of fear and power dynamics within the relationship which means that the impact on the child is different in every circumstance. Practitioners need to consider the underlying pattern of abuse and consider lived experiences rather than simply viewing as individual incidents. It is important to always take a trauma informed approach.

When working with families where domestic abuse is occurring, the risk of harm to the child must always be considered and responded to.

It is important that conversations and interventions do not increase risk to any victims. There is a useful section in the Home Office's statutory guidance for domestic abuse regarding [perpetrator tactics](#).⁶

The risk to victims can fluctuate and therefore it is important that the systems used are flexible to respond to victims' needs throughout the support as opposed to victims having to be flexible to the providers' internal systems. When considering a family's needs, it is important to consider the behaviours, strengths, vulnerabilities, and coping strategies of both adults to inform the assessment and plan. Consideration should be given to where the cause of harm that is impacting on parenting lies. These behaviours can be complex and could:

- Include where victims either feel unable to end the relationship or do not want this to happen and therefore may involve the provider having contact with both partners

⁶ [Home Office Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance 2022](#)

- Include a dynamic whereby one partner uses abusive behaviours and the non-abusive partner uses unhealthy behaviours to help manage the risks to themselves and/or their children e.g. alcohol misuse or self-harm

Professionals also need to recognise other parental needs that may be prohibiting positive behaviour change, as well as parenting capacity, and encourage both adults to access appropriate trauma informed support.^{7,8} This could include specialist substance use services, trauma counselling, mental health services, learning disabilities, debt management, housing services and employment opportunities. It is important that perpetrators of domestic abuse are held to account for their actions. It is vital to capture the voice of the child throughout work with a family and to respond to any emerging needs.

5. High Risk Factors

There will be circumstances when an individual could be at increased risk and these factors are considered when a DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Violence) assessment is completed, for example:

- **Victim's perception of risk of harm:** victims of domestic abuse often tend to underestimate their risk of harm from perpetrators of domestic abuse. However, if they say they fear further harm to themselves, their child(ren) or someone else this should be taken seriously when assessing future risk of harm.
- **Child abuse:** Evidence shows that both domestic abuse and child abuse can occur in the same family. Child abuse can act as an indicator of domestic abuse in the family and vice versa.
- **Separation and child contact:** there is a significant increase in risk at this time. Separation does not automatically mean safety. Research into risk factors for intimate partner homicide shows that the largest predictors of homicide were found to be stalking, separation and the victim's entry into a new relationship.⁹
- **Pregnancy/new birth (under 18 months old):** domestic abuse can start or get worse in pregnancy. Victims who are assaulted while pregnant, when they have recently given birth or who have young children, should be considered as high risk. This is in terms of future harm to them and to the unborn/young child.
- **Escalation:** repeat victimisation and escalation must be identified. Domestic abuse victims are more likely to become repeat victims than any other type of crime as when abuse is repeated it tends to become more serious.
- **Community issues/isolation:** needs may differ amongst ethnic minority victims, newly arrived communities, asylum seekers, travelling communities, older people, people with disabilities, as well as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender people. This might be in

⁷ The trauma-informed approach to mental health, illness and distress argues that there are undeniable and consistent strong correlations between all so-called 'mental health issues and human trauma, distress and oppression. Therefore, it is argued that 'disorders', 'illnesses' and 'diseases' are likely to be natural physical and psychological manifestations of human trauma and distress, in response to events and experiences in our lives – not brain abnormalities or mental illnesses.

⁸ [Working definition of trauma-informed practice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

⁹ "Risk factors for intimate partner homicide in England and Wales" Jennifer Chopra et. al., Health Soc Care Community. 2022;00:1-10.

terms of perceived racism, language, culture, social disconnectedness, insecure immigration status and/or accessing relevant support services. Forced marriage and honour-based violence where family/community try to restore their mistaken sense of honour and respect can also occur.

- **Stalking:** Persistent and consistent calling, texting, sending letters, and following behaviours. Stalking and physical assault are significantly associated with murder and attempted murder. This is not just about physical violence but also coercive control and jealous surveillance. Stalking is about fixation and obsession. It is now known through research that half of domestic stalkers who make a threat will act on it.
- **Sexual assault:** those who are sexually assaulted are subjected to more serious injury. Those who report a domestic sexual assault tend to have a history of domestic abuse whether or not it has been reported previously. Many domestic sexual offenders are high risk and potentially dangerous offenders.
- **Non-fatal strangulation (choking/suffocation/drowning):** Escalating violence, including the use of weapons and attempts at strangulation must be recorded when identifying and assessing risk. This includes all attempts at blocking someone's airway.
- **Credible threats to kill:** A credible threat of violent death can very effectively control people, and some may carry out this threat.
- **Use of weapons:** Abusers who have used a weapon, or have threatened to use a weapon, are at increased risk of violent recidivism.
- **Coercively control and/or excessive jealous behaviour:** complete control of the victim's activities and extreme jealousy are associated with serious violence and homicide. Consider honour-based violence – the victim may not have the freedom of choice. Examples may include fear of or actual forced marriage, controlling sexual activity, domestic abuse, child abuse, rape, kidnapping, false imprisonment, threats to kill, assault, harassment, forced abortion. The perpetrator may well try and control professionals as well.
- **Animal/pet abuse:** there is a link between cruelty to animals, child abuse and domestic abuse. The use or threat of abuse against pets is often used to control others in the family. Abuse of animals may also indicate a risk of future harm.
- **Alcohol/drugs/mental health:** the abuser's use of drugs and alcohol are not the cause of the abuse, but as with all violent crime, they might be a risk of further harm. Physical and mental ill health increases the risk of domestic abuse.
- **Suicide-homicide:** Threats from the perpetrator to take their own life have been highlighted as a factor in domestic homicide. A person who is suicidal should also be considered homicidal.

6. Responding to child victims of Domestic Abuse

During any discussions or assessments, it needs to be ensured that the child's lived experiences and views are captured. This needs to include a full understanding of the behaviours experienced and the impact on them. Capturing the voice of the child not only refers to what children say directly, but to many other aspects of their presentation. It means seeing their experiences from their point of view.

Practice reviews emphasise the importance of the Voice of the Child, highlighting that 'empowering children to express their views and learning to listen to what children may be

telling us about their experiences are crucially important issues in safeguarding practice. Unless you are hearing directly from victims, including children, you run the risk of not gathering the best evidence and truly capturing holistically the concerns.

In contexts where the safety of the adult victim is seen as the main priority this can dominate people's immediate thinking and actions, and children's voices can be lost. It is therefore important to gain an understanding of the "lived experience" of the child as opposed to isolated incidents.

Children would have witnessed the behaviours and are likely to have developed coping strategies; it is important to understand what these are and ensure they are not increasing risks to the children.

7. Safeguarding Children Referrals, Pathways and Thresholds

When a professional working in Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth or Southampton assesses that a child or family requires additional support, they need to consult the relevant threshold chart and complete as appropriate, an inter-agency referral or contact form as per local processes. The use of the Threshold Guidance will assist this process and help inform the practitioner's decision-making.

Consent must be sought when submitting a concern to Children's Social Care unless the professional is concerned that by doing so, this may place a person at risk of harm. 'Consent' means you have had a conversation with the family regarding your concerns, clearly explaining what information will be shared and with whom. Gaining consent is imperative to keeping children safe and should be seen as best practice in the majority of situations. Practitioners are reminded that where there are safeguarding concerns, and in particular where an immediate response is required to safeguard the child, consent is not required and a referral to children's social care should be made, informing the family where it is safe to do so.

When a referral is made to Children's Services, there must be clarity about who in the family is aware that a referral is to be made. Any response by Children's Services to such referrals should be discreet, in terms of making contact with the adult victim in ways which will not further endanger them or their children.

For children not referred to Children's Services, practitioners need to consider what support is needed to reduce and manage the risk for the child and to reduce the impact of the traumatic experiences of the child. Practitioners need to follow their local safeguarding partnerships Early Help procedures to help identify additional support for children.

Across HIPS, [Operation Encompass](#) is in place. This ensures schools are aware when a child is a victim of domestic abuse and can provide appropriate support.

Think Family Approach

Everyone has a responsibility to take a 'Think Family' approach in the context of safeguarding children and adults and this should be at the heart of practice across all partner agencies. A 'Think Family' approach refers to the steps taken by children's, young people's and adult

practitioners to identify wider family needs which extend beyond the individual they are supporting.

For example, in relation to safeguarding, if you work primarily with adults, you still consider the safeguarding needs of children, and if you work with children, you still consider the needs of the vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and so in terms of domestic abuse and safeguarding a 'Think Family' approach is essential and will help in securing better outcomes for adults, children and families by coordinating the support and delivery of services from all organisations

Children's Services and Early Help Information

[Hampshire/ Isle of Wight/ Southampton and Portsmouth Inter-agency referral/ contact form and Threshold Guidance](#)

[Hampshire Early Help](#)

[Isle of Wight Early Help](#)

[Portsmouth Early Help](#)

[Southampton Early Help](#)

8. Responding to adult victims of Domestic Abuse

There are a wide range of indicators to warn professionals that people they are working with may be a victim of domestic abuse. Some of these are quite subtle and it is important that professionals remain alert to the potential signs and respond appropriately. Some victims drop hints in their interactions with professionals and their behaviours may also be telling. However, there are other circumstances where victims may not acknowledge or recognise that they are a victim of domestic abuse.

It is important that all professionals listen to the people they are working with, observe their behaviours and the environment and persist and enquire about signs and cues. It is important that professionals do not consider any disclosure as an isolated incident, as the domestic abuse is likely to have been going on for some time before a disclosure is made, so it is important to understand the victim's "lived experience".

If you are concerned someone may be a victim, it is important that you ask them, BUT before asking ensure you:

- Make sure you ask in a private safe environment where the perpetrator cannot hear what is being said. (Do not ask questions in front of and nearby to the person who is abusing or causing harm to them)
- Do not use family or friends as interpreters. Consider the presence of children over the age of 2 years who may be able to repeat back to the perpetrator
- Be aware of victims who may be holding a mobile phone during the consultation as the perpetrator may be listening to the conversation

Being compassionate and non judgemental as this is highly valued by victims

9. Responding to adult perpetrators of domestic abuse

At Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) meetings and in Domestic Homicide Reviews, the perpetrator is often 'invisible' or are seen solely through a criminal justice lens. The [Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel \(Annual Report 2021\)](#) recommended improving the involvement of perpetrators at all stages including recognising the importance of effective work with people using abusive behaviours.

Professionals are encouraged to involve both parents in the care of their children. While this should continue where there is domestic abuse, when safe to do so, it is important any involvement of the abusive partner does not increase risks to either the child or the parent who is the victim.

If someone discloses to you that they are using abusive behaviours towards their partner, then it is important for them to explain what this looks like and to ascertain their understanding of the impact of their behaviour on their children and their partner. The [Respect website](#) has guidance for working with perpetrators of domestic abuse. [Engage](#) provides a roadmap for frontline professionals interacting with male only perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Local safeguarding partners are responsible for child protection policy, procedure and guidance at a local level. Working together with other relevant agencies, they must co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of work to protect and promote the welfare of children, including making arrangements to identify and support children at risk of harm.

10. Domestic Abuse Referral Pathways

Hampshire Pathway and Referral Process:

[Domestic abuse risk assessment, safety planning and referral pathways | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

[DomesticAbuseReferralPathwayforHampshire.pdf \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

Isle of Wight Pathway and Referral Process:

[Domestic abuse information for professionals, including the IOW domestic abuse referral pathway](#)

Portsmouth Pathway and Referral Process:



Domestic abuse
referral flow chart FIN

Further information can be found on the [PSCP website](#)

Southampton Pathway and Referral Process:

[Domestic Abuse \(DA\) Pathways Southampton - Guidance for Professionals](#)

[Identifying and Responding to Domestic Abuse - Guidance for professionals \(southampton.gov.uk\)](#)

[Identifying and Responding to High Risk Domestic Abuse in Southampton - Guidance for Professionals](#)

[DASH.pdf \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Southampton have adopted the [Safe & Together model](#)

11 Additional Considerations

Domestic abuse in teenage relationships

Domestic abuse in teenage relationships is just as severe and has the potential to be as life threatening as abuse in adult relationships. Victims and those who use abusive or unhealthy behaviours under the age of 18 should also have their needs considered under safeguarding procedures in order that age-appropriate support is considered. Teenage relationship abuse is not a term that is defined by the 2021 Act, or elsewhere in law. However, if the victim and perpetrator are at least 16 years old, abuse in their relationship can fall under the statutory definition of domestic abuse. Whilst young people under the age of 16 can experience abuse in a relationship, it would be considered child abuse as a matter of law. Abusive behaviours by one young person toward another, where each are aged between 16 and 18 could be both child abuse and domestic abuse as a matter of law. In responding to cases of abuse involving those under 18, child safeguarding procedures should be followed.

Teenage relationship abuse often occurs outside of a domestic setting. Victims may feel that domestic abuse occurs only between adults who are cohabiting or married. Teenage victims may find it difficult to identify abusive behaviour, for instance, controlling or jealous behaviour may be misconstrued as love.

. Young people who experience domestic abuse do so at a particularly vulnerable point in their lives¹⁰. They may experience a complex transition from childhood to adulthood which impacts on behaviour and decision making. It may impact on the way that they respond to abuse or if and how they engage with services.

Due to the stigma attached to LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans) identities, young people from the LGBT community may lack relevant and accurate information on healthy relationships, which may inform behaviour and decision making. LGBT young people may face unique obstacles to seeking help, especially in a context of a first relationship or when first coming out

¹⁰ SafeLives. Safe Young Lives: Young People and domestic abuse. 2017

as they may be unable to confide in their peers or family, owing to the reaction they might receive due to their sexuality or gender identity¹¹.

Young LGBT people (aged 13 to 24) also disclose disproportionately higher levels of abuse from immediate family members compared to other age groups¹².

Domestic abuse and harmful practices

Abuse may be perpetrated as a perceived means to protect or defend the 'honour' of an individual, family or community against alleged or perceived breaches of the family or community's code of behaviour. It can therefore include 'honour'-based abuse, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, and other harmful practices such as reproductive coercion (and as part of this, forced abortion).

Child-to-parent abuse

Abuse within the family includes child-to-parent abuse, also commonly referred to as Adolescent to Parent Violence/Abuse (APVA) and Child and Adolescent to Parental Violence and Abuse (CAPVA). Child-to-parent abuse can involve children of all ages, including adult children, and abuse toward siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles as well as other family members such as those acting as kinship carers. If the child is 16 years of age or over, the abuse falls under the statutory definition of domestic abuse in the 2021 Act.

There is currently no specific legal definition of child-to-parent abuse but it is generally accepted to involve some of the patterns of behaviour that can be found in other relationship contexts. Behaviours can encompass, but are not limited to, humiliating and belittling language, violence and threats, jealous and controlling behaviours, damage to property, stealing and heightened sexualised behaviours. Child-to-parent abuse appears gendered, with the majority of cases being perpetrated by sons against their mothers, although men and boys are victims too¹³.

Like other forms of abuse, child-to-parent abuse is characterised by shame and stigma which could mean parents are less likely to report the abuse to the police. Parents may fear being blamed, disbelieved, or conversely having their child taken away from them or criminalised leaving them reluctant to seek help. Recorded incidents likely represent only a small number of the real number of cases as families facing crisis point make the difficult decision to disclose their abuse. Victims of this type of abuse should also receive appropriate domestic abuse response and support.

The Home Office intends to update the guidance on child-to-parent abuse.

12. Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) - Clare's Law

¹¹ Magic, J, Kelly, P. LGBT+ people's experiences of domestic abuse: a report on Galop's domestic abuse advocacy service: Galop: 2017

¹² The research is based on analysis of 626 LGBT+ victims who received advocacy support from Galop's domestic abuse service in Greater London. Magic, J, Kelly, P. LGBT+ people's experiences of domestic abuse: a report on Galop's domestic abuse advocacy service: Galop: 2017

¹³ Baker, V, Bonnicksen, H. Understanding CAPVA: A rapid literature review on child and adolescent to parent violence and abuse for the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office: Respect: 2021

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) gives members of the public a formal mechanism to make enquiries about an individual who they are in a relationship with, or who is in a relationship with someone they know, where there is a concern that the individual may be violent towards their partner. This scheme adds a further dimension to the information sharing about children where there are concerns that [domestic abuse](#) is impacting on the care and welfare of the children in the family.

Members of the public can make an application for a disclosure, known as the ‘**Right to Ask**’. Anybody can make an enquiry, but information will only be given to someone at risk or a person in a position to safeguard the victim. The scheme is for anyone in an intimate relationship regardless of gender. Partner agencies can also request disclosure is made of an offender’s past history where it is believed someone is at risk of harm. This is known as ‘**Right to Know**’. If a potentially violent individual is identified as having convictions for violent offences, or information is held about their behaviour which reasonably leads the police and other agencies to believe they pose a risk of harm to their partner, a disclosure will be made.

For further information see [Request information under Clare's Law: Make a Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme \(DVDS\) application | Hampshire Constabulary](#)

13. Domestic Violence Protection Orders

Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) were implemented across England and Wales from 8 March 2014¹⁴. They provide protection to victims by enabling the police and magistrates to put in place protection in the immediate aftermath of a domestic abuse or violence incident.

With DVPOs, a perpetrator can be banned with immediate effect from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days, allowing the victim time to consider their options and get the support they need.

Before the scheme, there was a gap in protection, because the police could not charge the perpetrator if there was a lack of evidence and so provide protection to a victim through bail conditions, and because the process of granting injunctions took time.

For further information see [Domestic Violence Protection Notices \(DVPNs\) and Domestic Violence Protection Orders \(DVPOs\) guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

14. Domestic Homicide Reviews

A Domestic Homicide Review (a ‘DHR’) under section 9(1) of the [Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 \(‘the 2004 Act’\)](#) is a review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person to whom they were related or with whom they were in an intimate personal relationship, or by a member of the same household. Where a victim took their own life (suicide) and the

¹⁴ The Domestic Abuse Act introduced a new civil Domestic Abuse Protection Notice (DAPN) to provide immediate protection following a domestic abuse incident, and a new civil Domestic Abuse Protection Order (DAPO) to provide flexible, longer-term protection for victims. These are being trialled in other police areas before national roll out.

circumstances give rise to concern, such as it emerges that there was coercive controlling behaviour in the relationship, a DHR should also be carried out. Such reviews are carried out in local areas by Community Safety Partnerships (CSP), made up of one or more of the bodies and persons bodies listed in section 9(4) of the 2004 Act. The reviews are undertaken with a view to identifying the lessons to be learnt from the death, particularly regarding the way in which professionals and organisations work together to safeguard victims.

15. Local support

Hampshire

[Hampshire Domestic Abuse Partnership | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

For victims: [I need help for myself or someone else | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

For perpetrators: [I am hurting someone | Health and social care | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](#)

Isle of Wight

[Paragon](#) is the Isle of Wight's domestic abuse and sexual crime service provider. They also provide support and services to parents and carers who are experiencing child to parent violence.

[Hampton Trust](#) provide a range of services for perpetrators to encourage healthy, non-abusive relationships. It can include making referrals for support and engagement or to share intelligence for tracking and disruption purposes.

Portsmouth

Information on support for victims of domestic and sexual abuse can be found on the [PSCP website](#)

Southampton

Information on support in Southampton is available at: [Get help now \(southampton.gov.uk\)](#)

The helpline is available 9:30am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday.

Telephone: 023 8091 7917

Email: pippa@southampton.gov.uk

16. National support

[IRIS Interventions](#)

The IRIS programme provides specialist advocacy and support to patients at registered IRIS trained GP practices who are affected by domestic abuse.

[Refuge's National Domestic Abuse Helpline](#)

Providing information and advice regarding refuge vacancies and links to other specialist services in the community.

0808 2000 247

[Online live chat](#)

[Web form](#)

The [Men's Advice Line](#)

A confidential helpline run by Respect.

0808 801 0327

info@mensadviceline.org.uk

The [Bright Sky](#) app is a mobile app and website for anyone experiencing domestic abuse, or who is worried about someone else.

Women's Aid have a [directory of domestic abuse support services across the UK](#).

[Women's Aid live chat service](#) 7 days a week, 10am to 6pm.

helpline@womensaid.org.uk

For anyone experiencing domestic abuse and requiring immediate help, they can [ask for 'ANI'](#) in a participating pharmacy. 'ANI' stands for Action Needed Immediately. If a pharmacy has the 'Ask for ANI' logo on display, it means they're ready to help. An individual will be offered a private space, a phone and ask if support from the police or other domestic abuse support services is required.

[Safe Spaces](#) are also available in Boots, Morrisons, Superdrug and Well pharmacies, TSB banks and independent pharmacies across the UK. Once inside these locations, specialist domestic abuse support information will be available for you to access. Many Safe Spaces are also prepared to respond to the 'Ask for ANI' codeword, to provide victims with a discreet way to access help calling the police on 999 or specialist support services.

Find your [nearest Safe Space](#).

Hestia's [Respond to Abuse Advice Line](#) is a free resource for **employers**. Employers can call 020 3879 3695 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, or email adviceline.eb@hestia.org for support, guidance or information about domestic abuse and how to support employees and colleagues experiencing domestic abuse.

The [Employers' Initiative on Domestic Abuse](#) website provides resources to further support employers.

If you want to access help specifically to cater to your background and needs or want support and help for specific types of abuse there are several organisations that can help - see [Domestic abuse: specialist sources of support](#).

[Findaway](#) is a helpline for anyone who is worried that someone they know is being controlled, scared, or hurt by their partner, ex-partner or a family member.

[Report Harmful Content](#) is a helpline for making a report if an individual has experienced or witnessed harm online.

References

[Barnados: Effects of Domestic Abuse on Children](#)

Caring for children who have experienced domestic abuse

[Caring for children who have experienced domestic abuse | CoramBAAF](#)

Children Act 1989 c 41

Children Act 2004 c 31

Children and Social Work Act 2017 c 16

Data Protection Act 2018 c 12

Domestic Abuse Act 2021 c 17

Domestic Abuse Act Statutory Guidance

[Domestic Abuse Act statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory guidance consultation: government response

[Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory guidance consultation: government response \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Guidance for Health Professionals on Domestic Violence

[Guidance for health professionals on domestic violence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Human Rights Act 1998 c 42](#)

[Key Findings from analysis of domestic homicide reviews](#)

[Key findings from analysis of domestic homicide reviews - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Pan Dorset

[Domestic Abuse \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)

Respect Guidance

[Respect Guidance 'Work with young people's violence and abuse'](#)

Safelives

[Home | Safelives](#)

[Safelives Practice Briefing,](#)

Tackling Violence against women and girls strategy

[Tackling violence against women and girls strategy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

[Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Working definition of trauma-informed practice](#)

[Working definition of trauma-informed practice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Young People's Family Justice Board have produced some [top tips for professionals working with children and young people who have experience of and been affected by domestic abuse](#)

Version 1	Created	August 2024	To be reviewed	August 2026
Version 2	Created		To be reviewed	